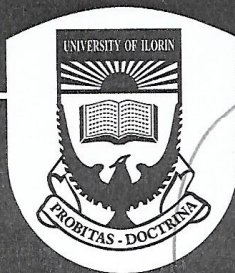


**ISSN 1117-9481**



# **ILORIN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY**

**Volume 7, No 1 July, 2015**

**Published by the  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, NIGERIA**



**CORRUPTION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA**

**Ifejika, Solomon I. & Aliu, Fatima O.**  
Department of Political Science  
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria  
+2348038754424; [rblawal@yahoo.com](mailto:rblawal@yahoo.com)

**Abstract**

*The local government institution came into the administrative framework of most countries of the world following the wide-spread recognition of its immense potentials to contribute and complement the efforts of higher levels of government in attaining the development goals and purposes of a nation through effective administration of basic developmental services to the grassroots. However, in Nigeria, the local government system has overtime operated at variance or in isolation to this important functional and ideological rationale for its existence in the administrative structure of the country due to the phenomenon of deep-rooted and pervasive corruption trailing the level of government. Corruption has remained the greatest bane of effective and efficient local government administration in Nigeria and a clog in the nation's wheel of progress. This paper, therefore, examines the major dimensions or aspects of corruption in local government administration in Nigeria. In the whole, it adopts a moral approach as strategy for tackling the trend. In this wise, the paper recommends deliberate ethical re-orientation and attitudinal change among stakeholders in local government administration as the most effective means of addressing the menace and empowering the local government institution to play its expected role in actualizing the nation's long-term growth and development objectives. On issues relating to theoretical background and methodology, this study depends on the Neo-Patrimonial Theory. Its source of data is essentially secondary involving books, journals, articles, and extant local government documents related to the subject matter under review. Data sourced were qualitatively analysed using the descriptive method of data analysis and qualitative reporting.*

**Keywords:** Constitution; Corruption; Local government; Workers

**Introduction**

In most countries of the world, the devolution of governmental powers to local government units has long been accepted as an effective strategy for attaining rapid national development. Consequently, in the organization of modern day scheme of governmental administration, nations have recognized this unique role of the local government and have given it a permanent place as an integral part of the general framework of public governance. In all governmental systems, it is now somewhat a universal practice that nations create administrative machineries at the grassroots to bridge the gap between the higher levels of government and the local people. The essence is to make governance and development most realistic and concrete to the generality of the localities within the polity. Where this important feature is lacking, governmental



### *Corruption in Local Government Administration in Nigeria*

administration undeniably becomes cumbersome, and consequently, developmental success largely remains a dream rather than reality.

Nigeria, for instance, had realized since independence that the local government system has unique potentials to contribute immensely to the actualization of the country's national development agenda, and has constantly undertaken reforms to reposition and strengthen the level of government to serve as real agent or instrument for social, economic and political transformation in the country. Undisputedly, successive governments in Nigeria, both military and civilian regimes have demonstrated concerted efforts and carefully sought to make the local government a valuable tool for achieving rapid overall growth and development of the nation from the below. The 1976 nationwide local government reform, which for the first time, conferred on the local government institution in Nigeria the status of the "Third-Tier" of government was and still remains one of the pragmatic steps in this direction. Following this reform, the local government became a distinct level of government just as the State and Federal Governments are at their respective levels and functional spheres. In other words, the local government, in view of the reform was constitutionally empowered to take responsibility and act as a government at the grassroots level. This was aimed at ensuring the autonomy and enhancing the capability of the level of government to actualize the rationale for its incorporation and continuous existence in the country's framework of public administration.

However, despite the efforts at evolving a virile and effective local government system in Nigeria, it is regrettable that the role of the tier of government in promoting and facilitating even and rapid national development of the country has remained generally unsatisfactory. This is mainly due to the firmly entrenched and pervasive corruption that runs through the veins and arteries of the institution of government. Ultimately, there is no contention that large scale and high level corruption permeates Nigeria's local government, hampering the smooth, effective and purposeful operation of the level of government in engendering the highly needed changes and transformation at the grassroots level. It is against this backdrop, therefore, that this paper basically takes a closer look at the common aspects or dimensions of corruption in local government administration in Nigeria and suggests effective strategy for exterminating the menace so as to enable the local government system play its expected role in the country's overall effort at actualizing its national development goals and objectives.

#### **Conceptualizing Corruption and Local Government Corruption**

Corruption is a universal phenomenon. The concept can be said to be vague in nature in that it means different things to different people, that is, what constitutes corruption to a given people or in a particular society may not be same for others. In as much as every society has the notion of corruption such that makes it a general problem or challenge to all societies, an act of corruption in one society may not necessarily be an act of corruption in another community. Be it as it may, no society is entirely free from corruption, though the view has been advanced that corruption is a major challenge for most developing states (Haarhuis 2005; Nadiz 2004). How true this assertion is cannot be

*Ilorin*

ascert  
insens  
the va  
politic  
all so  
degra  
the pl  
backg  
corrup

person  
1999;  
Gboy

create  
Howe  
sector  
the pu  
privat  
is elus

some  
prefer  
(Balb  
array  
pilfera



ascertained, hence it remains an assumption as those that champion this view appear to be insensitive to the incidences of corruption in the so-called advanced nations. Moreover, the vagueness of the term also lies in the fact that it has several facets - ethical or moral, political, social among others. Further, the causes, degrees and effects are not the same in all societies, however, the menace is generally seen as the results of systemic failure or degradation. Therefore, societies, scholars, researchers or agencies conceive and describe the phenomenon from the perspective that matters to them. In other words, ideological backgrounds of scholars and researchers inform their conceptions and definitions of corruption.

Corruption is generally defined in individualistic terms as the use of authority for personal gain (Aguilera & Vadera, 2007: 431; Doh et al, 2003: 115; Doig & McIvor, 1999: 3-5; Hodgson & Jiang, 2007: 1044; Jong-sung & Khagram, 2005: 137). Similarly, Gboyega quoted in (Olasupo, 2009: 188), opines that:

Corruption involves the giving and taking of bribe, or illegal acquisition of wealth using the resources of a public office, including the exercise of discretion. In this regard, it is those who have business to do with government who are compelled somehow to provide inducement to public officials to make them do what they had to do or grant undeserved favour. It is therefore defined as officials taking advantage of their offices to acquire wealth or other personal benefits.

Observably, these definitions specifically perceive of corruption in a way that creates the assumption that the trend is particularly common to the public sector. However, the use of office to actualise private gains is not a unique feature of the public sector, it also manifests in the private sector. While corruption is commonly attributed to the public sector, it also exists in other aspects of governance, such as political parties, private business sector, and NGO (USAID Anticorruption Strategy, 2005). Therefore, it is elusive to see corruption as an attribute of the public sector alone.

According to Otite cited in (Akindele, 2005:10), corruption means:

The perversion of (the) integrity or state of affairs through bribery favour, or moral depravity. Corruption involves the injection of additional but improper transactions aimed at changing the moral course of events and altering judgments and position of trust. It consists of the doers (givers) and receivers' use of informal, extra-legal or illegal acts to facilitate matters.

This description of corruption appears to be somewhat imprecise, but through some sort of deductive reasoning, one may rightly argue that the definers appear to have preference for the moral and social concerns of the term. On his own, Klitgaard in (Balboa and Medalla, 2002) notes that corruption can come in various forms and a wide array of illicit behaviour, such as bribery, extortion, fraud, nepotism, graft, speed money, pilferage, theft, embezzlement, falsification of records, kickbacks, influence peddling,



### *Corruption in Local Government Administration in Nigeria*

and campaign contributions. What is more, this perspective reveals a whole gamut of what can be described as concrete acts or manifestations of corruption, nevertheless, not with particular reference to any realm – public or private. In other words, the definition seems to be a generalized one.

Corruption in the government involves three broad layers. First is corruption within the broader political system. This includes the demands of electoral politics, the extensive use of patronage in political appointments, and the existence use of “pork barrel” funds. Second, is corruption within the public sector, which is usually focused on three major problems: spotty performance of mechanisms for identifying and sanctioning employees engaged in corrupt and illicit behaviour, considerations of pay and employment, and government procurement. Third is corruption within specific agencies, which involves grand corruption; and petty corruption, which involves smaller amounts of money, such as grease money to facilitate the delivery of goods and services (Primer on Corruption: 2005, cited in Balboa and Medalla, 2002). From the foregoing, it can be observed that corruption in government is so pervasive, permeating every sphere of governmental activities. The hiding costs of governmental corruption can neither be quantified nor qualified. Notwithstanding, at the most basic level, corruption subverts governmental effectiveness and responsiveness to the masses; weakens the institutions of government, and results in high level distrust, erosion of confidence and withdrawal of support for government by the citizens. Hence, corruption is morally or ethically and socially erosive.

#### **Local Government**

The concept of local government became one of the focal points in the literature of politics and administration following the widespread dissatisfaction with the centralized state system or structure during much of the post-second Worldwar era and the eventual universalization of the idea and practice of democracy. Like corruption and other terms, the concept of local government has apparently attracted wide scholarly or intellectual attention. Although, the local government bears differing names and status and enjoys varying limits of powers in different political contexts, the concept can be said to be one of the few terms that have received different but very close definitions in scholarly or intellectual discourse. This does not mean that the term enjoys a high degree of precision. The point being made is that most of the definitions offered in an attempt to explain the meaning of the term have quite a number of elements in common despite the disparate ideological orientations of the definers or scholars.

The most conspicuous of these elements is the emphasis the definitions lay on the “grassroots or local people”. According to King (1988: 3), the local government is universally found in modern polities, although it goes by various appellations. Its legitimacy lies in its “claim to represent the interests or wishes of the local inhabitants and to administer to their needs”. Founded on democratic ideals, it is required “that they be given an opportunity to control their affairs at this level, especially since this is the point at which their interests and welfare are most likely to be directly affected”. Thus, it is a concept whose meaning finds basis in idea of the people at the lowest level of the society’s strata, that is, the grassroots.

*Ilorin*

the o  
Wide  
Brasi

(UNO  
subd  
subst  
labor  
other  
in (C  
comi  
socie  
the i

(Adc

can  
gen-  
for  
agrc  
pov  
gov



One of the most popularly acknowledged conceptions of the local government is the one offered by the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), the World – Wide Association of Local Government during its 27<sup>th</sup> World Congress in Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, September 23 – 26, 1985. The body (IULA) defined local government as:

That level of government with constitutionally defined rights and duties to regulate and manage public affairs which are also constitutionally defined for the exclusive interest of the local population. These rights and duties shall be exercised by individuals that are freely elected on a periodical basis by equal, universal suffrage while its Chief executive shall be so elected or appointed with the full participation of the elected body” (International Union of Local Government Authorities, 1985).

The definition given by the United Nations Office for Public Administration (UNOPA) is equally prominent. It defined the local government as “a political subdivision of a nation or (in a federal system) state, which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected” (cited in Ola and Tonwe, 2009:4). In the view of Awa quoted in (Olawuyi, 1999:2), the local government is “that system under which local communities are organized to maintain law and order, provide some limited range of social services and public amenities and encourage the cooperation and participation of the inhabitants towards the improvement of their condition of living”.

In Nigeria, the guidelines for Local Government Reform of (1976:1) cited in (Adeyemi, 20012) conceived the local government as:

Government at the local level exercise through representative council established by law to exercise specific powers within defined area. These powers should give the council substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff and institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services and determine activities of state and federal government in their areas, and the ensure, through devolution of functions to these councils and through the active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, that local initiative and response to local needs and conditions are maximized.

While the argument may hold that these definitions vary in some ways, the fact cannot be denied that their points of similarities are more significant and critical to the general understanding of the meaning of the concept than their areas of differences. If not for any reason, all the above conceptions of the local government remain in consensual agreement that it is the government whose functional and territorial jurisdictions and powers are limited within clearly defined local boundaries. In this sense, the local government exists to be responsible and responsive to the affairs of the local people



### *Corruption in Local Government Administration in Nigeria*

through a representative body elected or selected by the local people themselves through a democratic process.

In advanced societies systems where the local government functions optimally, it touches the lives of the local people most effectively than the state and federal governments due to its intimacy and closeness to the people. Indeed, a functional local government system provides certain unique developmental services that are naturally local, and which cannot be undertaken by the higher levels of government to stimulate the overall national growth and development of the entire polity from the base, that is, the grassroots. Thus, the significance of this level of government cannot be overemphasized. Effective local government system is a veritable instrument for political, social, economic, cultural and human development in any nation. Simply put, the state of health of the local governing institutions in any political system is an important parameter for gauging the overall development progress of that country. Where its optimal and meaningful operation is not guaranteed, attainment of development agenda remains absolutely impossible and vice-versa.

#### **Dimensions/Aspects of Corruption in Nigeria's Local Government System**

The bulk of corruption and malpractices undermining the effectiveness and efficiency of local government administration in Nigeria manifest in various forms. Some aspects or dimensions of corrupt practices in the conduct of local government affairs to be examined in this paper include the following: embezzlement, financial mismanagement/misappropriation, manipulations in recruitment procedures. Ghost workers syndrome, malpractices/corruption in procurement Activities: Irregularities in revenue collection and desecration of the rule of law.

**Embezzlement:** A major form of corruption common in the local government system in Nigeria is the high incidence of direct embezzlement of local government funds by the officials and personnel of local governing units. Elected and appointed local government officials/staff, especially those at the top hierarchy are generally known for their inhumane act of looting and diverting funds that are meant for the smooth running and provision of essential developmental services to the local masses into their private or personal coffers. To cover their mischiefs, the popular myth propagated by the council officials is that the councils are always short of funds (Ugo and Ukpere, 2009). But it is the high tendency among them to accumulate wealth through unauthorized means at the expense of the local people whom they govern that presents an irresistible lure for excessive stealing that cripple the effective delivery of services for developmental purposes at the local government. Hence, Arowolo (2008) in (Adeyemi, 2012:192) observed that, "wide-scale embezzlement by officials of the grassroots has made the needed development of grassroots a tall dream and has rendered them financially incapable to discharge their constitutionally assigned responsibility". The situation is pathetic given the meager funds available for the administration of local units in the country. This has remained a major barrier to optimal functioning and performance of the third-tier of government in Nigeria over the years.

*Ilorin Jou*

**Financia**  
governme  
misappro  
allocatin  
profitabl  
personal  
process  
most pre  
not acco  
and aggr  
the loca  
for the  
satisfy  
massive  
neither  
Arowol  
local g  
general  
resourc  
honesty  
structu  
which  
in fina  
spend,  
Ogbon  
people  
how n  
betray  
the de

**Malp**  
greate  
There  
procu  
in Ni  
therel  
procu  
const  
awar  
to th  
const  
peric  
incid  
prob

**Financial Mismanagement/Misappropriation:** Those at the helm of affairs of local governments (i.e., decision makers) also indulge in obvious gross mismanagement or misappropriation of scarce local financial resources, usually by undemocratically allocating funds to their preferred adventures on behalf of the masses which is not often profitable and suitable to the will or wishes of the people they govern. They impose their personal whims and caprices on the local citizens without carrying them along in the process of initiating and implementing local projects and programmes to ensure that their most pressing needs are addressed. Evidently, priorities are misplaced; projects are done not according to or as demanded by the people but regrettably in tune with the selfish end and aggrandizement of the political leadership in collaboration with senior bureaucrats at the local government level of administration (Adeyemi, 2012). They decide what to do for the people and not the people choosing what they want because the officials want to satisfy certain selfish ends. Consequently, in most cases, such impositions result in massive wastages which constitute drain on local government units since the locals would neither appreciate nor support such projects or programmes. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Arowolo (2008) affirmed that, hard-earned and limited resources accrued to and raised by local government are always mismanaged. Good financial management in government generally consists of three major components: (i) budgeting, that is, the process of resource generation, allocation and management; (ii) accountability which aims at honesty and judicious use of public funds; and (iii) control which provides organizational structures for effective implementation. Financial management is that managerial activity which is concerned with planning and control of financial resources. It is the translation in financial terms of government policies; a fiscal estimation of what government plans to spend, where it plans to spend it and how it intends to source the funds (Agbakoba and Ogbonna, 2004: 65). However, since democracy confers power on the people, the local people are supposed to be actively involved in determining what project to be undertaken, how much to be spent on it and how it will be expended. The imposition is not only a betrayal of peoples' trust and mandate for local elected officials, it is also a desecration of the democratic tenet of participatory local governance or administration.

**Malpractices in Procurement Activities:** This constitutes another major source of the greater proportion of corruption that trail the local government administration in Nigeria. There is no aspect of local government administration where corruption is prevalent as in procurement activities. Evidently, there is contract scams in all local government councils in Nigeria. These contracts are inflated and worse still, the projects are not executed and thereby defeating the essence of budgets (Ugo and Upkere, 2009:841). In all stages of the procurement process corruption manifests vividly. For instance, in the cases of construction works, services, supplies and purchasing, contracts are over-valued and awarded to preferred contractors in return for certain percentage of the total contract cost to those awarding contracts. Furthermore, the use of sub-standard materials for the construction is rampant; projects are usually abandoned or not completed within specified period, and most times, poor quality jobs are delivered for public use which often leads to incidence of collapse of structures. In the cases of services, supplies and purchasing, the problem of over-invoicing, or as Oviasuyi et al (2010) put it, "inflation of the prices of



### *Corruption in Local Government Administration in Nigeria*

bought items” arises. It is not surprising, therefore, that in Nigeria a mere mention of the local government exudes corruption (Ugo and Ukpere, 2009:841).

**Malpractices in Recruitment Process:** Excessive maneuvering of recruitment procedures in local government is another aspect of corruption and malpractices that caused the level of government to remain somewhat perpetually in-active and unproductive over the years despite series of reforms to strengthen the tier of government by successive governments. There is high level of entronement of favouritism over meritocracy in the process of employment of staff or personnel of local government in Nigeria. This explains the reason why local governing units in the country are saturated with personnel (including the top administrative hierarchy) that do not possess requisite skills and expertise on local government administration, and hence the apparently unimpressive performance of the level of government. The elected local government offices holders on their side do not also possess the required academic qualifications. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria makes provision that the qualification for election into offices of the Chairman and the Councilors shall be the same as that of the election into the House of Assembly of a state. Section 106 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria puts the minimum educational qualification for election into the House of Assembly of a state as post-primary school certificate. This entails that the average political office holder in the local government is not expected to be a technocrat or a professional. The above scenario has made the local government councils to become the dumping ground for semi-literates or a starting point for political toddlers (Oviasuyi, Idada and Isiraojie, 2010). In this kind of situation, local governing units lack vibrant and responsible leadership and struggle to make meaningful impacts on the lives of the local citizens.

**Menace of Ghost Workers:** The ghost workers syndrome is one variant of corrupt practices that constitute both administrative and economic bottleneck to effective local government administration in Nigeria. It is beyond argument that this undesirable trend exists in all local government across Nigeria. Although, it is a common problem facing Nigeria’s public service in general at all levels, leading to huge wastage of financial resources running into billions of Naira monthly. Just recently, some state governments and federal agencies conducted in-house cleaning and discovered ghost workers under their payrolls (see *Newsdiaryonline*, August 1, 2011). The local government system is not spared. Most local governments have logs of persons who are under their respective payrolls, but do not appear to perform any official task at the council. In short, majority of them reside far in other parts of the country but receive salaries every month. Most of these individuals are never employed as staff, where they are, they are employed by one local political godfather or high-ranking local government official (e.g, Chairman) who ensures regular payment of their salaries. To lend credence, through the biometric data capturing system recently introduced by the Abia State Government for all staff in its local government service, no fewer than 3,185 ghost workers including 1,460 ghost pensioners were uncovered, and since the development, government have been saving a lot of revenue which had hitherto been fraudulently diverted into private pockets. In

*Ilorin.*

2014,  
2012,  
ghost  
comm  
Gove  
29 de  
(New  
units  
funt

Dese  
in its  
coun  
gove  
riggi  
disso  
repla  
polit  
held  
are r  
the l  
and  
stren  
unpr  
cour  
and

Illeg  
reve  
in th  
such  
of lo  
capi  
to ei  
gain  
fees  
(On  
uno  
plac  
pers  
mul  
cou  
gov  
alle

n of the

ruitment  
ces that  
ve and  
ernment  
sm over  
ment in  
aturated  
equisite  
parently  
ernment  
ons. The  
ation for  
at of the  
n of the  
ion into  
that the  
chocrat  
become  
viasuyi,  
rant and  
he local

corrupt  
ve local  
le trend  
n facing  
financial  
rnments  
rs under  
m is not  
pective  
majority  
Most of  
d by one  
an) who  
tric data  
aff in its  
50 ghost  
saving a  
ckets. In

2014, almost N37m was saved from pensions fund alone (Uka, 2014). In November 2012, Kogi State verification committee on local government Staff uncovered 9,258 ghost workers in 21 Local Councils (FRN, 2013). Further, in Bayelsa State a five-man committee headed by Mr. Dibiya Ayakurai, set up to audit the staff of Sagbama Local Government Area, uncovered a N10 million monthly wage scam and these included some 29 dead persons and 72 ghost workers who have been receiving salaries since 2003 (*Newsdiaryonline, August 1, 2011*). This trend is the same in all the local government units across the federation. The menace has consistently besieged the financial and functional viability of the local government system in Nigeria over time.

**Desecration of Rule of Law and Constitutionalism:** The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria in its Section 7(1) guarantees the existence of democratically-elected local government councils, and enjoins the state governments to ensure the existence of such. Many state governments have converted this responsibility into a license to rape democracy by rigging elections at the local government level. Also, some state governors arbitrarily dissolve the local government councils and dismiss the chairmen, and in most cases, replace them with caretaker committees and interim management officers drawn from the political cronies of the state governor. For instance, local government elections have not held in Anambra State since 1998 (Igwe, 2013). Not ensuring that local government units are run or administered by democratically elected bodies of representatives from within the localities as provided for in the constitution is a fragrance breach of the rule of law and profaning of the country's constitution. In addition to this, it hinders the spread and strengthening of democratic principles from the bottom, and this has far reaching unprecedented consequences for the practice and consolidation of democracy in the country at large. The constitution is the pillar of every modern society, lack of respect and adherence to its spirit and letters is the beginning of failure for any state.

**Illegality in Revenue Collection:** Huge malpractices and illegalities also occur in the revenue collection exercise of local government councils in Nigeria. Local governments in the country have constitutional rights to generate revenues from different sources such as rates, local License fees and fines, earning from commercial undertakings, rents of local government properties, etc. Local government officials and personnel usually capitalize on the general ignorance and lack of awareness of majority of the local people to embark on unauthorized exploitation and extortion of citizens for their selfish material gains. However, when they are authorized to collect levies, they often inflate the rates, fees, levies, etc., and duplicate receipts. It is in lieu of this that Omoigui-Okavio quoted in (Onwuemenyi, 2008) asserted that, some local government officials institute personal and unofficial revenue generation machinery thereby encouraging multiple taxation and placing heavy burden on tax payers. She alleged that many local chairmen generate personal taxes for personal gains using the so called levy collectors who themselves have multiple receipts. This has resulted in the low integrity and reputation local governing councils enjoy from Nigerians. The masses of the localities generally perceive the local government more as a honeycomb of corrupt individuals rather as a government meant to alleviate their sufferings and hardship and better their social and economic conditions. No



### *Corruption in Local Government Administration in Nigeria*

wonder the declined support and low level of interest the local people demonstrate towards the political and administrative affairs of their local council governments.

In view of the above analysis of some aspects of corrupt practices in the local government system in Nigeria, it becomes obvious that the economic/financial, administrative/functional, democratic and developmental consequences or costs of corruption in local government administration in the country cannot accurately be ascertained or measured. Evidently, corruption is the greatest bane of local government administration in Nigeria (Akinyemi, 2012). The canker-worm has eaten deep into the marrow of the local government system. Corruption has been described as a major cause of comatose state of local government administration in Nigeria, and a major hindrance to good government (Onwuemenyi, 2008). Thus, along this line, Oviasuyi, idada and Isiraojie (2010) noted that "as in all levels of government in Nigeria, corruption is predominately widespread, undiluted and unambiguous in the local government". Instead of discharging their functions as development centres, local governments have acquired notoriety for corruption, fiscal indiscipline and overall irresponsibility (Agbo, 2010:20). To this end, it has become high temples of corruption and crass mismanagement where combined effect of graft and inefficiency are proudly showcased by the officials (Ekawu, 2007:18). This whole scenario, in short, propels one to conclude that local governments in Nigeria are more or less sources of massive drain on the country's economy than instruments of development as originally propagated. The Nigerian example of local government administration unarguably defeats the basic ideological justification for the existence of the local government system elsewhere in the world.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The local government system exists in the administrative structure of most modern states in the world due to the wide-spread acknowledgement of its indispensable role in making the goal of national development easily attainable. Notwithstanding that the structure, nomenclature, constitutional status and powers and responsibilities of local government in different political contexts differ from one another, most countries recognize it as a critical and distinct level of government without which governmental administration becomes apparently cumbersome. It is partly for this reason and mainly for the ultimate goal of national development that individual nations have incorporated and given it a permanent position as an integral part of the whole governmental administrative machinery. Ultimately, the local government system reduces work-load on higher levels of government, brings government nearer to the people, provides training ground for future political leader, serves as a platform for democratic development and training, participates in rendering important public services to the people and complements the efforts of the higher levels of government to make governance meaningful and impactful on the masses of the citizens. Thus, local government in any country is, indeed, an essential tool for achieving social, economic, political and other aspects of the overall development of a nation, be it developed or developing.

Considering all this, it is pitiable, however, to mention that the Nigerian local government system defeats the essence of the existence of the level of government in all ramifications. Local government administration in Nigeria has remained largely

*Ilori*

unpr  
emb  
Nig  
ratic  
viril  
rear  
loc  
con  
Nig  
as,  
pro  
con

smc  
and  
wa  
be  
Nig  
loc  
cur  
to  
the  
sta  
ad  
the  
ov

**Rc**

Ag

Ag

Ag

A

A

strate

local  
ncial,  
ts of  
y be.  
ment  
o the  
cause  
ice to  
and  
on is  
stead  
quired  
(:20).  
where  
cawu,  
nents  
than  
local  
or the

states  
aking  
cture,  
ment  
t as a  
ration  
imate  
n it a  
rative  
levels  
d for  
ining,  
ts the  
actful  
d, an  
overall

local  
in all  
argely

unproductive, inefficient and ineffective due to the ugly trend of pervasive and highly embedded corruption that trails the level of government. The local government system in Nigeria has performed unsatisfactorily to the effect that many have questioned the rational for its continued existence in the country. Corruption is the bane of effective and virile local government administration in Nigeria. No where does the evil of corruption rear its ugly head in the governmental administrative machinery of Nigeria than in the local government system. In short, mere mention of local government connotes corruption. The bulk of corruption that permeates local government administration in Nigerian, as seen in the body of the paper, occurs in different forms or dimensions such as, outright embezzlement, financial mismanagement/misappropriation, malpractices in procurement activities, menace of ghost workers, desecration of rule of law and constitutionalism, and illegalities in revenue collection.

These and many more constitute major aspects of corrupt practices that hinder smooth and effective local government administration and sabotage the socioeconomic and political development of Nigeria. Corruption in local government constitutes massive waste and drain on Nigeria's economy and financial resources. It is a social evil that must be quickly eradicated in order to protect all levels of government in Nigeria and the Nigerian state itself from being consumed by it. The bulk of literature on corruption and local government administration in Nigeria is littered with a vast array of strategies for curbing corruption in the local government system, but not much attention has been paid to the role of morality in mitigating the evil trend. In view of the foregoing, this paper, therefore, recommends deliberate ethical re-orientation and attitudinal change among stakeholders in local government administration as the most effective means of addressing the unwholesome trend so as to guarantee the efficiency and effectiveness of the third-tier of government since its health state has far reaching consequences for the overall national development of the country.

#### References

- Agbakoba, O., Ogbonna, H. (2004) "Local Government Administration and Development in Nigeria" A capacity Building, Manuals, Lagos: Hurilaws Publications.
- Agbo, A. (2010) "Institutionalizing Integrity" *Tell Magazine, Special Publications: ICPC, Steadily Fulfilling its mandate*, December.
- Aguilera, R.V. and Vadera, A.K (2007) "The Dark Side of Authority: Antecedents, Mechanisms, and Outcomes of Organizational Corruption". *Journal of Business Ethics*, 77: 431-449.
- Adeyemi, O. O. (2012) "Corruption and Local Government Administration in Nigeria: A Discourse of Core Issues". *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 1, 2, 183-198.
- Akindele, S. T. (2005) "A Critical Analysis of Corruption and Its Problems in Nigeria",



*Corruption in Local Government Administration in Nigeria*

*Anthropologist*, Vol. 7, n° 1, p. 10.

- Arowolo, O. (2006) "Local government Administration and challenges of rural Development in Nigeria". See <http://www.artcilebase.com>. Ilor  
Nac
- Balboa, J. and Medalla, E. M. (2002) "Anti-Corruption and Governance: The Philippine Experience". *Philippine Institute for Development Studies; Philippines Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Study Center Network*. Nac
- Ekawu, E. A. (2007) "Imperative of Institutionalizing Integrity in the Local Government System in Nigeria". *ICPC News*, Volume 2, No.7, November. Nev
- Doh, J., Rodriguez, P., Uhlenbruck, K., Collins, J. and Eden, L. (2003) "Coping with Corruption in Foreign Markets". *Academy of Management Executives* 17(3): 114-127. Ola
- Doig, A. and McIvor, S. (1999) "Corruption and its Control in the Developmental Context: an Analysis and Selective Review of the Literature". *Third World Quarterly* 20(3): 657-676. Ola
- Federal Government of Nigeria, (1999) "Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria". Lagos: Government Press. Ola
- Federal Republic of Nigeria, (2013) "House of Representatives: Notice Paper", Monday, 22 April. On
- Haarhuis, K.C. (2005) "Promoting anti-corruption reforms: Evaluating the implementation of a World Bank anti-corruption program in seven African countries (1999-2001)". Wageningen: Posen & Looijen Printers. Ov
- Hodgson, G. M. and Jiang, S. (2007) "The economics of corruption and the corruption of economics: An Institutional Perspective". *Journal of Economic Issues* XLI (4): 1043-1061. Ug
- International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) (1985) "27<sup>th</sup> World Congress, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, 1985". Uk
- Jong-Sung, Y. and Khagram, S. (2005) "A comparative study of inequality and Corruption". *American Sociological Review* 70(1): 136-157. US
- King, M. C. (1988) *Localism and Nation Building*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.

Nadiz, V. R. (2004a) "The state of corruption: Indonesia". In Bhargava, V. & E. Bolongaita, (eds) *Challenging corruption in Asia: Case Studies and a Framework for Action*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 209-235.

Nadiz, V. R. (2004b) "Corruption and neo-liberal reform: Markets and predatory power in Indonesia and Southeast Asia", paper presented at a conference on *Neo-Liberalism: A Stock Take after Three Decades*, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, September 9-11, 2004.

*Newsdiaryonline* (2015) "Urgent Need for More Elaborate Audit of Government Payrolls/ Prosecution and Punishment of Perpetrators of Ghost Workers' Fraud", August 1, 2011. See [http://newsdiaryonline.com/ghost\\_workers.htm](http://newsdiaryonline.com/ghost_workers.htm) Retrieved February 25.

Ola, R.O. F. and Tonwe, D.A. (2009) "Local Administration and Local Government in Nigeria". Lagos: Amfitop Books.

Olasupo, F.A. (2009) "Due Process Corruption in Public Service in Nigeria: Local Government as a Case Study". In Adeyemi, O. O. (2012) "Corruption and Local Government Administration in Nigeria: A Discourse of Core Issues". *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 1, 2, 183-198.

Olawuyi, G. (1999) *Introduction to Local Government: Trend and Development*. Ketu: Gokus Publishers, pp. 1-2.

Onwuemenyi, O. (2008) "Tackling Corruption in Local Councils, access at See <http://www.punchng.com/article>.

Oviasuyi, P. O., Idada, W., Isiraojie, L. (2010) "Constraints of Local Government Administration in Nigeria". *Kamla-Raj Journal of Social Sciences*, 24(2): 81-86.

Ugoh, S. C. and Ukpere, W. I. (2009) "Problems and Prospects of Budgeting and Budget Implementation in Local Government System in Nigeria". *African Journal of Business Management* Vol.3 (12), 836-846.

Uka, S. (2014) "Abia uncovers 3,185 ghost workers in LGs", *Punch*, July 16. Available at <http://www.punchng.com/news/abia-uncovers-3185-ghost-workers-in-lgs/> Accessed February 25, 2015.

USAID. (2005) "USAID Anti-Corruption Strategy". Retrieved April 18, 2006 from [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/democracy\\_and\\_governance/publications/pdfs/a\\_c\\_strategy\\_final.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/pdfs/a_c_strategy_final.pdf)



*Ilori.*

P

**Abs**  
The  
base  
mea  
poo  
bec  
mea  
mea  
bas  
will  
The  
leve  
whi  
effi  
inve  
ass

**Key**

Int  
Ac  
and  
sta  
a p  
Ba  
(2)  
acc  
acc  
spe  
wi  
me  
pro  
inc  
tra